

Wychmere Harbor Subwatershed

Harwich, Cape Cod, Massachusetts

Wychmere Harbor Subwatershed is located in Harwich and has an area of 454 acres. Wychmere Harbor opens into Nantucket Sound.

The Town of Harwich water system is supplied by twelve wells located in South, East, and North Harwich, which draw water from the Monomoy Lens aquifer. Approximately 90% of the town is supplied by public water. The need, for additional water storage in Harwich led to the purchase of land for a water tower north of Aunt Edies Pond in 2000, but plans to borrow \$3.1 million to build the tank have been put on hold.

There are no public sewers in Harwich. In 2002, the Harwich Planning Board was beginning to hold informal discussions on how best to solve wastewater contamination of the town's harbors.

Harwich has 5,000 acres of vacant developable land. If one half of that is protected, it would mean that 26 percent of the total available upland would be set aside in the town. Currently, just eight percent of available open space is preserved in Harwich.

Stewards:

- Harwich Shellfish and Marine Water Quality Committee
(www.vsv.cape.com/~harharb/main6.html)

Studies conducted in the watershed:

- Cape Cod Coastal Embayment Project (A Nitrogen Loading Analysis of Wychmere Harbor). 1998. Cape Cod Commission.
- In November 2001, the MA Department of Environmental Protection completed a Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) Report for Harwich water supplies. The SWAP report identifies land uses within water supply protection areas that may be potential sources of contamination. It is available from the DEP online at <http://www.state.ma.us/dep>.
- Cape Cod Atlas of Tidally Restricted Salt Marshes. 2001. Cape Cod Commission.
- Monomoy Capacity Study. Cape Cod Commission.

Who is collecting water quality data and where:

- Division of Marine Fisheries, Harwich Natural Resources, and Harwich volunteer group: mouth, mid harbor – east and west shores.
- Harwich Natural Resources Department proposed in 2001 to expand upon the current sampling locations and begin monitoring many of the 33 ponds in Harwich. Samples will be analyzed for the nitrogen series, orthophosphates, total phosphates and chlorophyll a.

Management actions taken:

- The coastal waters of Harwich were designated a No Discharge Area by the state. The discharge of all boat wastewater, even if it is treated, is prohibited.
- A treatment system designed to treat runoff entering Wychmere Harbor from the town parking lot and Harbor Road and Route 28 was installed in a poor location and has had problems with saltwater intrusion. Monitoring of the system has shown it to be ineffectual in treating runoff.

- Harwich Conservation Trust developed a priority open space project with the help of The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts. The project identified the top 200 parcels for open space acquisition. The total assessed value of the land is \$6 million.

Subwatershed facts: (For data sources see the Appendix)

- 21 E sites: 1, on Cranberry Lane
- Solid waste sites: none
- Zone IIs located in this watershed: none
- Interim Wellhead Protection Areas (IWPAs): none
- Percent of the undeveloped land that is protected (according to 1985/1990 data): 35.0%
- Acres of existing wetlands: 18
- Certified vernal pools: none
- Named freshwater ponds: Paddocks (*Harwich*)
- Named rivers or creeks: none
- Shellfish growing areas: Wychmere Harbor is conditionally approved.
- This watershed contains Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife.

Priorities:

- Initiate water quality monitoring program in Wychmere Harbor for bacteria and nutrients to participate in the Estuaries Project, Southeastern Massachusetts Embayment Restoration. Work with Estuaries Project to develop a QAPP.
- The Town of Harwich should continue to purchase potentially developable land located within the existing wellhead protection areas and areas for use as future well sites (SWAP Report, 2001).
- Paddocks Pond needs volunteers to participate in the Pond and Lakes Stewardship Project (PALS), measuring water quality and other characteristics of the pond.
- Work with the MA Highway Department to develop best management practices for drain located on Route 28 at Bank Street, discharging into Wychmere Harbor.
- Address impacts from Route 28 (at Snow Inn Road) and Harbor Road and town parking lot at Wychmere Harbor.
- Preserve open space as identified in Harwich Conservation Trust priority open space project.
- Acquire open space. Parcels considered a priority for acquisition for water supply protection and development: Harwich Tracts 8, 10, 11, 18, 19, 23, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, and 41 were ranked as having medium or high water supply development potential in the Cape Cod Commission's *Priority Land Acquisition Assessment Project* (1999). These tracts are located throughout the town of Harwich.

Recreation:

Camping areas: none

Golf courses: none

Pathways and trails:

- www.capecodcommission.org/pathways/trailguide.htm

Public access:

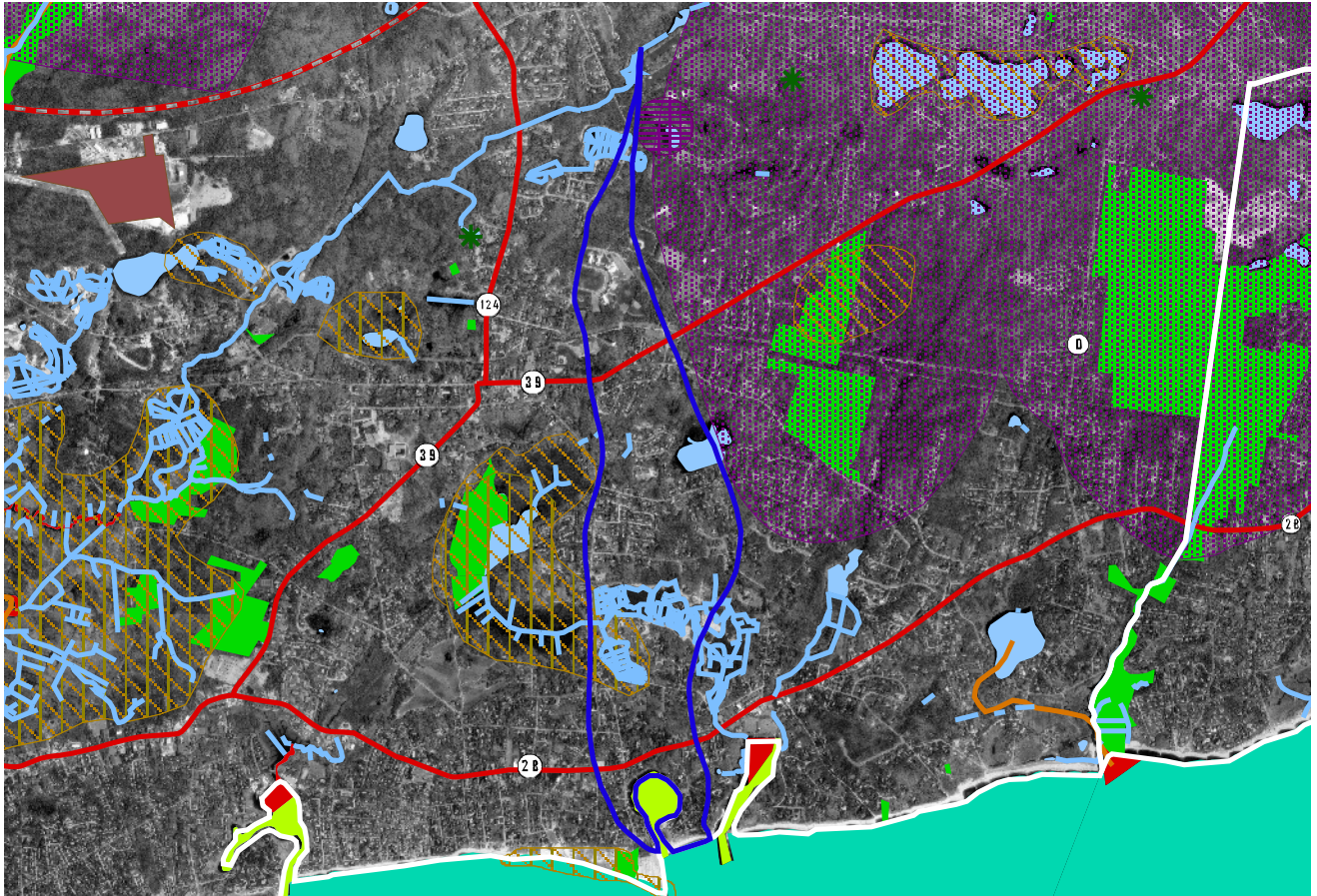
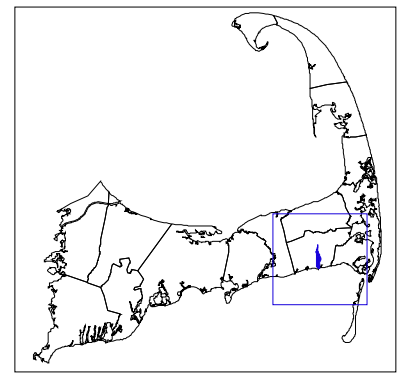
- www.state.ma.us/dfwele/pab/pabSEmap.htm

Public beaches and landings:

- No beaches
- Landing on harbor

Wychmere Harbor

Harwich, MA



Watershed Resources



0 0.5 1 Miles

Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program Data

- Certified Vernal Pool
- Priority Habitats of Rare Species
- Estimated Habitats of Rare Species

Groundwater Protection Areas

- Interim Wellhead Protection Area
- Zone II
- Solid Waste Facility

Watershed Boundary

Anadromous Fish Run

Shellfish Growing Areas

- APPROVED
- CONDITIONALLY APPROVED
- MANAGEMENT CLOSURE
- PROHIBITED
- RESTRICTED
- Open Space

Streams

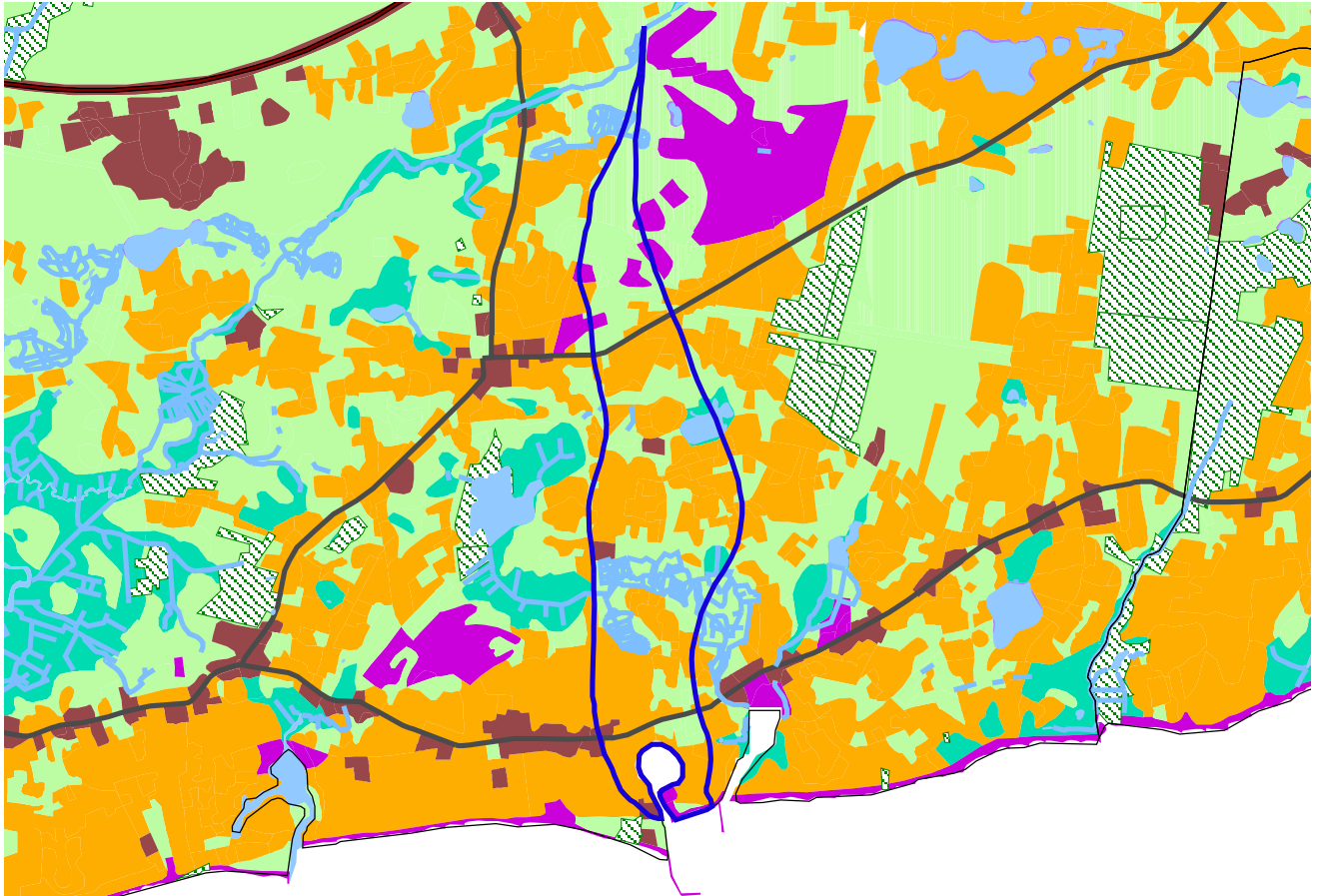
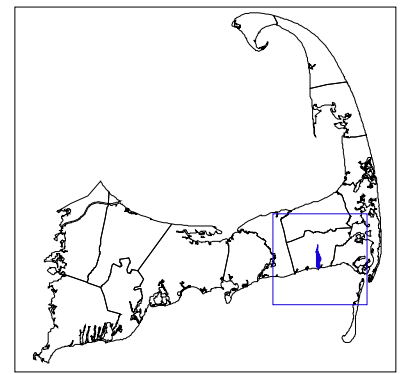
Ponds

Roads

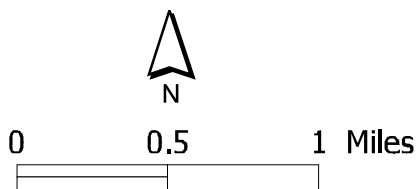


Wychmere Harbor

Harwich, MA



Land Use



Land Use

